



Montana Library Association

From the Mountains to the Prairies

MLA BOARD REPORTS

Office held/Chair of: President

Reported By: Elizabeth Jonkel

Date: April 2019

Progress or Successes Since Our Last Meeting:

The MLA Board met four times the past year and held two special meetings to discuss the FY18/19 Budget and HR issues. Issues of import discussed throughout the year included improved membership retention and recruitment, succession planning and improved administrative management procedures.

As part of its ongoing responsibilities, the Board with Executive Director Debbi Kramer has kept the MLA Handbook and calendar up to date. This includes changes to language regarding co-chairs for the Public Library Division. Budget forms were also streamlined to assist Board members with the submission financial requests. The MLA website has been kept current with a Job Links section added. A decision was made to amend the name of the MLA Leadership Retreat held every June to the MLA Board Retreat so as to emphasize that the event is an extended version of the Board's mandatory quarterly meetings.

The Government Affairs Committee was granted funding to organize a two-day retreat in Lewistown, MT in November 2018. This successful retreat gathered the entire committee together with the State Librarian, lobbyist Nanette Gilbertson and MSC staff to discuss a strategic plan for advocacy in Montana.

We held three very successful membership retreats this year: The school library division retreat in Bozeman in August, the fall retreat in Chico in November, and the Offline retreat in Butte in February. Each retreat was excellent and financially successful.

We had a financially successful MLA Conference in Helena. This year's theme was "Going the Whole Way," a reference to the idea that libraries should comprehensively support patrons' needs. We continued to offer all-in-one conference registration this year. A pre-conference session with Rich Harwood of the Harwood Institute was set up in partnership with the State Library. Rich works with communities to solve shared problems, create a culture of shared responsibility and deepen people's civic faith. Themes discussed included capacity building, civic engagement, awakening the human spirit, and finding a narrative for change. Mayor Wilmot Collins of Helena was the keynote speaker and author Rick Bass appeared for the Author Luncheon. The MLA Board thankful to all who presented and attended.

I plan to attend the American Library Association annual conference in Washington, D.C. on June 20-21.

New Issues:

Board Action Requested:

None.

Other Comments:

Thank you for the pleasure of serving as your President. It was a rewarding experience.